

Department of Defense (DoD)
Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS)
Field Advisory Services - *FAS*
Classification Appeal Decision

DoD Decision:	Classification Act (General Schedule)
Initial classification:	Supervisory Planner and Estimator, WN-4701-07
Organization:	Naval Air Station Public Works Department Maintenance Control Division
Date:	June 14, 1996

Introduction

On February 8, 1996, Civilian Personnel Management Service received a position classification appeal from , who is employed at the Naval Air Station, Public Works Center, Maintenance Control Division, . He is currently classified as Supervisory Planner and Estimator WN-4701-07. The appellant has indicated that his position should be excluded from the Federal Wage System (FWS) and classified as a General Schedule (GS) employee. To decide the proper classification of the position, it is necessary to first determine its pay category. The pay category aspect of the appeal has been accepted and adjudicated under the provisions of 5 U.S. Code 5103.

The record includes a copy of the appellant's Planner and Estimator position descriptions, . It should be noted the appellant supervises several WD positions, such as Planner and Estimator (Plumbing) WD-4206-08; Planner and Estimator (Structural) WD-4607-08; Planner and Estimator (Air Conditioning) WD-5306-08, and several other General Schedule employees. During the review the appellant regularly indicated that other Navy positions are classified as Engineer Technicians GS-802-12/13. We may not consider the classification of other jobs as a basis for deciding this appeal. This is because we are obliged by law to classify positions based on their current duties and responsibilities and the application of guidelines published by Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Thus, comparison to published guidelines, not to former jobs, is the intended and exclusive method for classifying positions.

Sources of Information

In deciding this appeal, we considered information obtained from the following sources:

- a. The appellant's letter of appeal.
- b. Information submitted by the Human Resources Office.
- c. Audit with appellant.
- d. Discussion with Public Works Officer, Naval Air Station.

- e. Visit to the Housing complex and other work sites.
- f. Discussion with Human Resources Office official.

Job Information and Pay System Evaluation

The job audit indicates that the appellant is responsible supervising several WD employees who plan and estimate work as assigned and prepare completed engineering contracts, projects, and reports. The appellant jobs meets the minimum requirements of a manager/supervisor official, who assigns and reviews work, completes performance reviews, cites training needs, and recommends hiring. The primary point of the position is supervision per se not actually performing the function. The appellant's staff prepare job orders; plan and estimate cost of maintenance, repair, alterations; and construction including mechanical, electrical, and utility projects. The record illustrates that the primary purpose of the Maintenance Control Division is to plan and estimate hours, material, and type of repair and maintenance for Public Work jobs. The duties consist of:

- receiving and reviewing customer work/job order, and developing the submission into appropriate work statement. Visit the work area to determine the scope of the project, and explain the process to the customer.
- preparing detailed cost estimate covering labor, material, and equipment/machinery to accomplish proposed project. Reviewing contractors proposal for completeness, accuracy and reasonableness, and attend contractor/agency negotiation to resolve differences.
- serving as project manager providing technical guidance if contractors encounter unforeseen difficulties on site. Maintains contact with Quality Assurance Specialist (QAE's), who oversee all Small Purchase Contracts. Conduct close-out inspection with customer/contractor/QAE.s.
- preparing written reports which detail existing condition of property and make appropriate recommendation.
- developing five (5) year plan identifying discrepancies and corrective action.

The appellant provided several different work examples of on-going and completed projects: remove asbestos floor tile replace various heating and air conditioning systems repair sewer line paint various units clean windows ; repairer chillier in bowling alley ; grounds maintenance ; and erosion controls .

FPM Supplement 532-1, subchapter S11-1a shows that a position is properly covered by the special plan for Production Facilitating jobs only if it is under the Federal Wage System and exempt from the Classification Act. The **Introduction to the Position Classification Standards**(page 26) indicates the following:

5 U.S. Code 5102 (c) (7) exempts from coverage under the General Schedule those "employees in recognized trades or crafts, or other skilled mechanical crafts, or in unskilled, semi-skilled, or skilled manual labor occupations, and other employees including foremen and supervisors in positions having trade, craft, or laboring experience and knowledge as the paramount requirement."

The "paramount requirement" of a position refers to the essential, prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the primary duty or responsibility for which the position has been established.

Whether particular types of positions are trades, crafts, or manual labor occupations within the meaning of Title 5 depends primarily on the facts of duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements; i.e., the most important, or chief requirement for the performance of a primary duty or responsibility for which the position exist. If a position clearly requires trades, crafts, or laboring experience and knowledge as a requirement for the performance of its primary duty, and this requirement is paramount, the position is under the Federal Wage System regardless of its organizational location or the nature of the activity in which it exists.

A position is exempt from the General Schedule if its primary duty involves the performance of physical work which requires knowledge or experience of a trade, craft, or manual-labor nature.

A position is subject to the General Schedule, even if it requires physical work, if its primary duty requires knowledge or experience of an administrative, clerical, scientific, artistic, or technical nature not related to trade, craft, or manual labor work.

We find that the appellant's primary responsibility requires an in-depth, practical knowledge of a variety of shop operations, that trades or crafts experience and knowledge is desirable in carrying out that responsibility, and that the appellant has considerable experience in a particular field such as painting, carpentry, electrical, mechanical, heating and air conditioning, etc. The appellant believes his position should be classified as General Schedule rather than Federal Wage System (Production Facilitating Jobs). We find that the appellant's primary responsibility does not absolutely require both experience and knowledge in trades or crafts.

The record infers that the appellant's has had formal trades and crafts experience in particular trade area (electrical, mechanical, structural, plumbing, etc). This can be determined by reviewing the previous job description and review of the work orders which have the parenthetical title for the employees staff. The record does show that the appellant's staff make plans and estimates not only with respect to particular discipline (electrical), but also with respect to other work, such as carpentry, painting, concrete work, air conditioning, and plumbing. For example, work order # the installation of a generator includes several disciplines such as air conditioning, high voltage electrical, heavy equipment operator, plumbing, welding, and other; or job order # , which has woodworking, plumbing, carpentry, air conditioning, and electrical; or job order # which includes carpentry, electrical, and mechanical. Further, the record also shows that when planning a job that involves primarily air conditioning work or primarily electrical work, the appellant's perform estimating work for other trades in the same job order, such as welding or carpentry work, that are necessary for the total job to be accomplished. The fact that the appellant makes plans and estimates with regard to, for example plumbing work despite having little formal experience in that trade indicates that a person occupying the appellant's position could, in theory, make plans and estimates with regard to any trade without having formal experience.

The record is clear that if the appellant's lack experience in a trade or craft, there are several places to which he can turn for help. The performance plan and desk audit indicate the appellant and staff regularly use the Engineered Performance Standards (EPS) Manual which can determine labor hours, material, and other cost factors. In addition, there are numerous precedent specifications, manuals (Grainger), and previous job orders which are readily available in the office. Simply stated, they estimate material needed for each job by either referring to extensive historical data from previous jobs, or estimating needs based on EPS tasks. The EPS is a job estimating system (by carpentry, pipefitting, electrical, painting, roads, etc.) which identifies by "task" and man-hours to accomplish the work. In addition, they have a "source" by calling upon professional engineers at NAS,. Additionally, the process of estimating work (labor, material, and total cost) is supplemented by the automated system called Facility Engineering Job Estimating (FEJE)

which the appellant 's utilize for all jobs.

The record indicates that while the staff prepare sketches and specifications (not to scale) for many projects, the planning and estimating work requires less detailed understanding of trades and crafts operations than a person would need to actually perform those operations. The record provides no evidence that the staff planning and estimating work requires them to perform hands-on trades and crafts work on a regular and recurring basis. Based on the above, we find that although knowledge and experience of trades or crafts is desirable, and although the appellant may have such knowledge and experience, the position does not clearly require such knowledge and experience for successful performance of its primary responsibility.

In order for a position to be exempt from the Classification Act, we note that its primary responsibility must not only require trades or craft experience and knowledge, but that requirement must be "paramount". That is, it must be the most important, or chief, requirement for performing the primary duty of the position. Given this definition, we find that even if the appellant 's primary responsibility did require trades or craft experience and knowledge, that requirement is not paramount. Therefore, the appellant's position does not meet the requirement for exemption from the Classification Act.

DECISION: The appellant 's positions is covered by the Classification Act (General Schedule). The agency must reclassify the position to the appropriate title, occupational code and grade.